(b) whether any early solution to the border dispute is in sight; and

(c) by when the next round of talks is likely to be held and what was the Chinese reaction to India's principled stand on the border issue in the East, in the middle sector and in the area adjacend to Kashmir in the West?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): (a) During the recent visit to China of the then Minister of External Affairs, Shri Vidyacharan Shukla, the work of the Joint Working Group on the boundary question was reviewed, *inter alia*, by both sides. The *desire to work for a fair, reasonable and* mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question, through peaceful and friendly consultations, was reaffirmed.

(b) The boundary question is a complex one and would have to be resolved through patient negotiations. No timeframe can, therefore, be set for the conclusion of these negotiations.

(c) The next session of the Joint Working Group is expected to be held in Beijing by June, 1991. The positions of the two countries concerning the boundary question are well known. The two sides are currently engaged in defining the parameters for a boundary settlement and exploring how differences can be narrowed so that a fair and reasonable solution is arrived at.

Minister of External Affairs' visit to Sri Lanka

*71. SHRI G. G. SWELL:
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he had visited Sri Lanka in the last week of January; if so, the outcome of the visit;

(b) whether Sri Lankans have asked for the abrogation of the present Indo-Sri Lanka Accord;

(c) the features in the Indo-Sri Lanka accord which the Sri Lankans found objectionable; and

(d) whether India have agreed to the abrogation of the accord and its replacement by a treaty of Friendship and Cooperation?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): (a) The former External Affairs Minister's visit to Sri Lanka from 28—31 January 1991, while providing an opportunity to express our concern over the ethnic issue in Sri Lanka, also underlined our desire to develop allround bilateral relations, particularly in the economic, trade and cultural fields. Our belief was reaffirmed that only a negotiated political settlement of the ethnic issue would provide a viable solution to the problem, and that the political framework created by Sri Lanka following the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1987, provided a good basis for a resonable and enduring settlement. We also stressed the need to pursue measures to bring the parties concerned to the negotiating table.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

DTC fleet

*72. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of DTC buses plying on the roads and the number of commuters who travelled in those buses during the months of December, 1990 and January, 1991;

(b) the reasons for reducing the number of buses; and

(c) whether there is any proposal not to ply DTC buses on Sundays?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA: (a) The average number of DTC buses plying on the roads